UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1996/94
21 August 1996
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH AND
SPANISH

Resumed substantive session of 1996
New York, 2-4 October 1996
Item 1 of the provisional agenda*

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The Secretary-General has received applications from Australia and Spain for full membership in the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (see attached).

2. By its resolution 1986/66 of 23 July 1986, the Economic and Social Council invited the Secretary-General to encourage the participation of experts on a wider geographical basis. Governments are invited to make available, at the request of the Secretary-General and at their own expense, experts to serve on the Committee.

3. The present membership of the Committee consists of experts from Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, the Russian Federation, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

4. The Secretary-General is pleased to approve the applications of Australia and Spain for full membership in the Committee and requests the Council's endorsement of that decision.

* E/1996/93.

96-21590 (E) 040996 090996 100996

/...

Annex I

LETTER DATED 9 JULY 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AUSTRALIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA ADDRESSED TO THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

I am writing to seek formal Australian membership of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods.

Australia has been attending meetings of this Committee, as an observer, for a number of years. Although Australia's observer status does not provide formal voting rights, our delegations have actively participated in debates and discussion on a wide range of dangerous goods transport issues.

Australia has a well-developed regulatory regime for the transport of dangerous goods. Our transport requirements, as detailed in the Australian Dangerous Goods (ADG) Code, are derived from the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods. These Recommendations, prepared by the above-mentioned Committee, have formed the technical basis for Australia's dangerous goods transport requirements and legislation for over 10 years. As such, Australia has extensive practical experience in applying the Recommendations to the domestic and international transport sectors.

The manner in which Australia incorporates its dangerous goods requirements into national legislation and regulations has also been of interest to the Committee. In particular, the format of the Recommendations is to be changed from an advisory document into a set of "model regulations", drafted in a style suitable for incorporation into legislation. This initiative mirrors a similar decision taken in Australia approximately two years ago to draft the ADG Code into national uniform model regulations. Given Australia's close alignment with the Recommendations, our regulation development experience may be of value to the work of the Committee in this area.

Australia believes that our extensive dangerous goods experience and regulatory framework would enable Australia to make a valuable contribution to the work of the Committee. This position is supported by a number of members of the Committee who have actively encouraged Australia to seek formal membership status. Australian membership of the Committee would also expand the regional representation on the Committee.

I would therefore be grateful if you could initiate the necessary procedures to ensure that Australia's request for formal membership of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods is submitted to the appropriate United Nations decision-making organizations.

(Signed) Howard BAMSEY

Annex II

LETTER DATED 25 MARCH 1996 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR TRANSPORT SERVICES OF THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT OF SPAIN ADDRESSED TO THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

For many years, the Spanish Government and the relevant business sectors have taken a growing interest in all matters related to the transport of dangerous goods. This interest has been heightened in recent years by a significant increase in this activity by all means of transport, including multimodal transport, as a result of the country's own economic growth and its growing involvement in world trade; its membership in the European Union has been a key factor in this regard.

Because of its geographical location and its isolated areas, Spain has always been a transit and destination country for a considerable volume of trade in products classified as dangerous, primarily petroleum products. Since the country's major ports draw large concentrations of this traffic, attention is being focused on regulating and controlling it because of the risks it involves and the population's growing awareness of this issue.

With respect to internal traffic, Spain has developed an important chemical and mining industry, with the result that flows from production sites in various parts of the country represent very large concentrations of such traffic, which is carried mainly by road and coastal transport, as well as by railroads and, to a lesser extent, pipelines.

In view of the foregoing, Spain has subscribed to all existing international agreements and rules in this area - the European Agreement concerning International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), International Regulations concerning the Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail (RID), International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code and International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) - and has incorporated these provisions into its national regulations. In some cases, such as that of road transport, Spain has made these rules even more strict.

Spain has participated as actively as possible in the various meetings held regularly on this subject - the ADR meeting, the joint RID-ADR meeting and the RID, IMDG Code and Dangerous Security Container (DSC) group meetings - and in the meetings of ICAO, as a member of the ICAO Council.

Likewise, Spain has participated for many years as an observer in the meetings of the Committee and the Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and in one of their working parties. For all of these reasons, we believe that the time has come for Spain to become a full member of both the Committee and the Subcommittee of Experts, to which end I ask that this formal application, in which Spain takes the keenest interest, be transmitted to the appropriate party.

(Signed) Manuel PANADERO LÓPEZ
Secretary-General for Transport Services